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Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative**

Summary

This report responds to Executive Board decision 2007/1 (E/ICEF/2007/7 (Part I)), adopted at the first regular session of 2007. In this decision, the Board, inter alia, took note of the revised draft Global Framework for Action for the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative, recognized its potential contribution to achieving Millennium Development Goal 1 in mobilizing wider global partnerships to end child hunger and undernutrition, and encouraged UNICEF to continue discussions with Member States and relevant partners on its further development.

The Board also requested the submission of a report for action at its annual session of 2007 on several issues relating to the Initiative, in order for the Board to review the role and involvement of UNICEF therein. These issues are addressed in the present report.

The Executive Board may wish to consider adopting the draft decision in paragraph 33 of the report.

* E/ICEF/2007/8.
** This report was submitted late because of the need for internal consultations.

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1. As described in detail in E/ICEF/2007/4, the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative (ECHUI) aims to strengthen partnerships for the Millennium Development Goal target of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015, using the percentage of children under five years of age who are underweight as a key indicator. It aims to help bring about a sustained decline in the proportion of children under age five years worldwide who are underweight, from about one third at the beginning of the last decade to one sixth or less by the middle of the next decade. Its focus is on promoting attention and catalysing effective action on children's hunger and undernutrition, by intensifying partnerships in support of national policies and initiatives and through advocacy, using the latest data on these problems and the best available evidence on "what works" to address them.

Update on planning of the Initiative

2. As envisaged by the Executive Board, since January 2007 discussions on the evolving Global Framework for Action for ECHUI have continued with a range of interested partners in the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector. Planning has advanced for a prospective launching of a broad-based partners' group that would guide the Initiative, to be chaired on a rotational basis among members, initially by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in his personal capacity. Extensive and valuable comments on the technical focus and scope of the Initiative have been provided by the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition, as well as by individual agencies including the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). These comments will contribute to the strengthening of the Global Framework for Action. Work is also continuing to define clear and concrete targets to which ECHUI will contribute as a catalytic initiative and the strategies it will use and promote (see annex 1). Meanwhile, the Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP), in its decision 2007/EB.1/3 (WFP/EB.1/2007/1) of 22 February 2007, authorized WFP to continue the development of the Initiative and its proposed partners' group, steering committee and secretariat; and approved the WFP role in the 2007-2008 work plan with a first-year budget of $1.31 million, contingent upon approval by the UNICEF Executive Board of UNICEF participation with a matching contribution of funds for the joint secretariat.

3. Partners at the global level, which initially include UNICEF and WFP, with involvement of and interest from FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNHCR, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), key NGOs, private sector partners and others, have continued to discuss the draft work plan and the prospective launching of the Initiative. In these discussions, a major emphasis continues to be placed on working with United Nations country teams (UNCTs) and international partners to support national authorities in scaling up integrated nutrition-focused and hunger-related interventions and services as part of their national policies and plans, in order to achieve sustained results for children. Practical lessons from scaled-up programme collaboration and partnerships on child nutrition in such countries as Ethiopia and in the Sahel are being applied through ongoing collaboration elsewhere with WFP and other partners (see paras. 26-29 below).

Role, functions and responsibilities of UNICEF and division of labour among partners

4. A detailed division of labour among the partners to the Initiative will be established by the partners' group once it has been formally established and its work plan finalized, with support from the secretariat. Meanwhile, however, major elements of this division of labour have obtained a high degree of consensus. National authorities will take the leadership role in terms of developing, reviewing and where necessary, strengthening or realigning national policies, programmes, standards and systems for addressing country-specific problems of child hunger and undernutrition.

5. Regional intergovernmental and technical organizations will play a major supporting role through the strengthening, refinement and promotion of strategic approaches, partnerships, monitoring and cooperation on these problems across countries. Existing regional initiatives, including "Latin America and the Caribbean without Hunger 2025" and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, provide major opportunities for synergy and acceleration towards the goals that ECHUI will promote.

6. Among the United Nations agencies and through UNCTs, United Nations resident coordinators will be mobilized to take a lead in providing high-level advocacy and mobilizing technical advice as required by national partners on hunger and nutrition issues affecting children, as part of their promotion of the Millennium agenda. UNDP is expected to provide a range of support, including policy advice and to national monitoring and reporting on the Millennium Development Goals, which encompass the hunger- and nutrition-related targets. FAO will provide technical leadership within the Initiative on a range of household food security issues and related production sector aspects, including through its knowledge base of experience and good practices at country level. WHO will play a similar role in relation to the technical and normative aspects of ECHUI partnerships in the health sector. The United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition will provide ongoing technical advice to the Initiative, including the partners' group. The World Bank, IFAD and prospectively, the regional development banks, will consider national proposals for lending and other forms of support in priority countries, for purposes relating to the goals of ECHUI. In the case of the World Bank, the consideration of investments in priority countries is expected to be particularly informed by the paper, *Repositioning Nutrition as Central to Development — A Strategy for Large-Scale Action* (World Bank, 2006). UNHCR, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other key agencies will also be strongly involved through UNCTs and the global partners' group.

7. Among the initiating partners, WFP will continue to apply its extensive logistical, technical and field operational expertise and resources to strengthening national capacities to deploy food-based and other interventions relating to child hunger and undernutrition. It will also continue to contribute to joint advocacy efforts by the ECHUI partners. WFP will continue to host and co-support the small joint secretariat for the Initiative.

8. UNICEF will support the Initiative primarily as a member of UNCTs, through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) where it exists and based on its ongoing and new country programmes of cooperation, as approved

by the Executive Board. Among the ECHUI partners and through these programmes, UNICEF in particular will support the national implementation of related initiatives for the delivery at scale of integrated health and nutrition basic services for families and communities. Depending on country situations and national priorities and working with other partners, UNICEF may promote and support: health, nutrition and hygiene education, including the promotion and protection of exclusive breastfeeding and the promotion of complementary feeding; micronutrient supplementation; household water treatment; the promotion of hand-washing with soap; and parasite control. Such specific elements of household food security as therapeutic feeding for severely malnourished children, including in emergencies, will also be supported where needed.

9. Within the broad focus areas identified for the Initiative, UNICEF will continue to support, among other possible activities: data collection and nutritional assessments; building family and community capacities for sustained action for the survival and healthy growth of their children, including to address growth faltering; behavioural change in support of recommended nutritional practices; the enhancement of national capacities and policies, particularly in the health and water and environmental sanitation (WES) sectors, for basic service delivery at scale, nutrition-related emergency responses based on the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in emergencies; and catalytic support to innovations and pilot initiatives linked to wider national policy development. UNICEF will also continue to play an important role, in the context of ECHUI partnerships, in advocating and building alliances at national and international levels for attention to nutritional issues affecting children's rights, in both non-emergency and emergency conditions and on a sustained basis. UNICEF communication capacities at various levels will also support the raising of awareness of these challenges, in conjunction with other members of the partners' group.

10. UNICEF will also work with FAO, UNDP, WFP, WHO, the World Bank and others in support of the further development and review of national policies, including poverty reduction strategies (PRSs), sector wide approaches (SWAps) and medium-term expenditure frameworks, to promote the optimal and most appropriate integration of nutritional investments and strategies for children and women, based on the best available evidence, assessments and analysis. Public policy efforts will continue to encompass advocacy and assistance to Governments for appropriate legislative and regulatory reforms in such areas as food fortification and support to breastfeeding. UNICEF will contribute to strengthening of national and international databases on nutrition among vulnerable groups, including through continuing support to multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS), DevInfo, situation analysis on children and women and emergency assessments, in collaboration with the demographic and health surveys (DHS) and through global child-related statistics and such publications as *Progress for Children*. Maintenance by UNICEF of key data sets, including its tracking of global and country incidence of underweight among children under age five years and other key nutrition indicators, will be central to the Initiative's advocacy and accountability strategies. UNICEF will also work with other members of the partners' group in the documentation, evaluation and wider dissemination of field experience in addressing hunger and undernutrition, including from national and community-level innovations supported by United Nations agencies under the UNDAF and through joint programmes.

11. Non-governmental partners in the Initiative primarily will support the building of needed capacities in national and local government institutions, and among community-based organizations and networks, for the delivery of nutrition-related services and support to the most vulnerable children and poorest families, and for local assessments, pilot innovations, operational research, social mobilization and monitoring. Key NGOs will also be partners in building national and global consensus and strengthening policies and alliances to tackle endemic problems of child hunger and undernutrition. Private sector partners will support efforts to engage companies operating in global, regional and national markets, through co-promotion of innovations and new technologies, developing communications and messaging, contributing technical expertise to identifying solutions and helping to scale up interventions. Sustainable food fortification and the promotion of hand-washing are examples of potential areas for private sector partnerships. Academic and technical institutions will also contribute to the development of country-specific strategies, the piloting of innovations, operational research and recommended practices.

12. Representatives of these various constituencies, including national Governments, regional institutions, United Nations agencies, NGOs and private sector agencies, will participate as members of the partners' group, which will strategically guide the Initiative as it evolves. The group will define, adopt and monitor a results-based annual work plan for the Initiative, including the activities of the secretariat, based on the Global Framework for Action. The group will advise the small steering committee on issues relating to policy and strategic management of ECHUI and will promote common advocacy approaches, awareness and broad-based ownership among the respective constituencies, in support of action for children. It will also promote a common analysis of whether the world and its regions are on track to meet the Millennium Development Goal target relating to child hunger and undernutrition, and of what more needs to be done through partnerships to ensure a sufficient rate of progress.

Implications for UNICEF capacities to achieve organizational targets under the focus areas of the medium-term strategic plan

13. The ECHUI addresses a range of cross-sectoral causes of low birth weight, poor growth and other nutritional problems among infants and young children. These are closely linked to child mortality. The ECHUI partnership approach aims to promote better outcomes for child survival, growth and development and has the potential to make a significant contribution to these outcomes, as reflected in the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2006-2009 (E/ICEF/2005/11), and for the Millennium Development Goals to which the MTSP is designed to contribute. The Initiative will also form part of the intensified multisectoral effort for child survival and development which is being supported in a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa by UNICEF and other partners, including the African Union, based on successful or promising initiatives for scaling-up community-based outreach and clinical interventions in health, nutrition, water and sanitation and HIV/AIDS (see also the annual report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2007/9)).

14. The ECHUI will strengthen the partnerships through which UNICEF pursues the key results and organizational targets under the MTSP, and will thereby add value to these efforts on a highly cost-effective basis. This impact is anticipated on

the basis of the very close and direct correspondence of the focus areas and strategies of ECHUI with the key results and targets already established in the MTSP, and to the strategic intention of the MTSP of building wider and more effective partnerships for the achievement of results for children, including in priority countries and at global and regional levels.

15. The Initiative, as elaborated in the draft Global Framework for Action, will also adopt strategies that correspond very closely with those contained in the UNICEF joint health and nutrition strategy for 2006-2015 in support of the MTSP (E/ICEF/2006/8), welcomed by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2006 in decision 2006/3 (E/ICEF/2006/5/Rev.1). Both approaches emphasize country-level situation assessment and analysis among children and women as a basis for leveraging policies, plans and budgets through improved knowledge and evidence, and then translating these into large-scale, accelerated action for improvements in health and nutrition outcomes among children. Many of the priority interventions identified in the joint health and nutrition strategy in turn are emphasized by the Global Framework.

16. The enhanced effectiveness of partnerships on issues of child hunger and undernutrition between United Nations agencies, national authorities, NGOs, private sector actors and financing agencies will most directly support the MTSP key results for young child survival and development (focus area 1), particularly targets 4-8 and 12. These partnerships will also have positive implications for targets within the MTSP focus areas on basic education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS and children, and policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights (see annex 2). In addition to taking forward many of the areas of cooperation established in the MTSP, several of the thematic and corporate evaluations and surveys identified to be undertaken in the framework of the MTSP are also directly relevant for ECHUI.

17. The Initiative, through its promotion of cost-effective responses to the rights of children based on more integrated social sector delivery systems, will also create important positive synergies for these systems as a whole. The strengthening of national policies for child-focused development and children's rights, of capacities for the delivery of linked interventions at national and subnational levels, of community mobilization, of emergency response systems and of multisectoral household survey and monitoring systems, all will have positive effects for Millennium Development Goal targets in such areas as pre-school and basic education, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment and child protection (especially social protection, which is part of the household food security component of ECHUI). These impacts and synergies therefore will span the entire range of the MTSP focus areas, including results for the CCCs, well beyond child hunger and nutrition alone.

Implications and consequences for the allocation of UNICEF core resources, including to country programmes

18. The large majority of UNICEF programmable core resources will continue to be allocated based on national priorities through country programmes of cooperation, within UNDAFs where these exist. The Initiative will assist UNICEF, in conjunction with national partners and other agencies in UNCTs, to ensure an adequate focus on national challenges of child hunger and nutrition in the Common Country Assessment (CCA) or similar national analysis of key development and

human rights issues. Depending on the outcomes of these analyses and on the priorities for United Nations cooperation agreed, normally through the UNDAF, with national authorities, UNICEF-assisted programmes of cooperation will continue to consider the appropriate level of emphasis and allocation of core resources to MTSP results areas and targets which address the specific patterns and causes of child undernutrition and related problems in each country.

19. In the framework of the MTSP, UNICEF will monitor trends in estimated expenditures on nutrition-related interventions, including those to be promoted by the ECHUI Global Framework of Action, and will report on these periodically, including to the Executive Board. It is estimated that regular resource expenditures on programme assistance for areas of cooperation which are directly related to the ECHUI focus areas totalled some $16.8 million in 2006, plus an additional $88.8 million in other resources (regular and emergency). In addition, a further estimated $28.9 million in regular resources and $84.4 million in other resources were spent in 2006 on broader health and nutrition intervention packages and school-based sanitation and hygiene education, elements of which are also directly related to the global focus areas of the Initiative.

20. Since the major focus of the Initiative is on strengthening of partnerships and the use of available data for evidence-based advocacy to catalyse broader action — approaches which are likely to be highly cost-effective but not financially intensive — ECHUI in itself is not anticipated to have more than a marginal impact on the allocation of UNICEF core resources, including for country programmes of cooperation. These allocations will continue to be determined through the programming process in each country, according to national priorities and the situation of children, including for agreed support for national responses to the nutritional problems facing children, based on the best available country assessment and analysis of these problems. In the event of specific national needs arising which cannot be covered from the current regular resource allocations to country programmes, the Executive Director may draw on available discretionary resources, in the form of the regular resources set-aside or the Emergency Programme Fund, to respond to these needs on a temporary basis.

21. UNICEF technical staffing patterns at country level are derived from the agreed focus of the country programme of cooperation. Existing staff who are contributing to cooperation in areas directly related to child nutrition will be expected to further emphasize support to partnership development, situation analysis and consensus-building, within and beyond the UNCT and with national authorities, on the scope and nature of challenges facing children and on the level and the type of national actions, with the support of international cooperation, which are necessary to address them. UNICEF staff working in these areas will also place increased emphasis on the use of evidence, including data and international good practices, for advocacy and support to policy development and scaled-up programme design. This relative shift of emphasis, in line with the focus of ECHUI, is fully consistent with the strategies and focus on partnerships, advocacy, leveraging of resources and support to national capacity development and "upstream" policy work, which form an integral part of the MTSP.

22. The correspondence of the Initiative with the UNICEF MTSP and joint health and nutrition support strategy was described in paras. 13-17 above. Accordingly, at global level, UNICEF will support the Initiative on an ongoing basis through the

work of its Programme Division (especially the clusters for nutrition, child survival, WES, HIV/AIDS and early childhood development), its Division of Communication (for support to public advocacy) and its Division for Policy and Planning (including for support to data monitoring, tracking of indicators for the Millennium Development Goals and analysis of nutrition trends). ECHUI will form part of the regular work of these and other organizational units and will be fully integrated in their ongoing contributions to the organizational targets of the MTSP and the joint health and nutrition strategy.

23. Coordination and monitoring of the UNICEF role in the Initiative will continue to be undertaken by designated staff with appropriate experience (an estimated 30 per cent of the time of one senior-level and one mid-level staff member, representing an in-kind allocation of about $120,000 per year, plus some directly related travel costs). UNICEF will also allocate up to $1 million per year from the support budget to provide support to the joint secretariat, hosted by WFP and expected to include further contributing agencies. This co-funding support will include the costs of secondment of a team leader (at D-2 level) and a communication officer (at P-4 level), as well as support for consultations, partnership development, analysis, travel, communication and advocacy work by the joint secretariat, as part of the overall work plan of the partners' group.

Implications for UNDAFs, poverty reduction strategies and national planning processes

24. Partners to ECHUI will aim to ensure that due emphasis is given to assessment, analysis and strategic focus on national challenges for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, as well as targets and indicators relating to hunger and undernutrition in CCAs, national analytical exercises and UNDAFs, which respond to national priorities through strategic cooperation of the United Nations system.

25. Various examples exist where UNCTs are working on child hunger and nutrition issues through established instruments for national cooperation, including CCAs, UNDAFs and joint programmes. ECHUI partners will encourage United Nations resident coordinators and country teams to discuss the appropriate level of emphasis to be given to these issues in the CCA or similar analytical exercises, and in the formulation of UNDAFs and their ongoing subsequent review, evaluation and revision, in the light of national and subnational data and trends.

26. Within UNCTs, UNICEF and WFP already are collaborating on a significant basis in over 50 countries to address issues of child and maternal nutrition, usually with a range of other partners. In 39 countries, UNICEF and WFP are collaborating through formal joint programme mechanisms.

27. In five countries of the Sahelian subregion, where undernutrition is an attributable cause of more than one half of child deaths and the prevalence of underweight children among children under age five years ranges between 32 and 40 per cent, members of UNCTs are already working closely through UNDAFs and with regional, NGO and financing partners in support of national policies and programmes to address the challenge. With the involvement of United Nations resident coordinators and of FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and WHO as lead agencies in different areas, and with programmatic and operational assistance, support is being provided for treatment and care for undernourished children and for a range of

preventive measures, including infant and young child feeding, micronutrient supplementation, household food security, immunization, malaria and diarrhoeal disease control, hand-washing promotion and other areas incorporated in the ECHUI Global Framework of Action.

28. In Ethiopia, under the UNDAF, UNICEF and WFP jointly support and assist the implementation of the national Extended Outreach Strategy which, through Child Health Days, provides a combination of critical health and nutrition interventions to large numbers of children, including vitamin A supplements, deworming tablets and immunizations. Some 10.5 million children were reached in 2006; of these, the nutritional status of 6.6 million was assessed and some 475,000 were found to be acutely malnourished and referred to a targeted supplementary feeding programme supported by WFP.

29. In India, UNICEF, WFP and other partners are collaborating with state and national governments to increase the effectiveness of the long-established Integrated Child Development Services, which provide a range of services to families to promote child survival and nutrition through a network of some 700,000 community workers. Support is being provided in six states for: strengthening the skills of community workers and their supervisory systems; increasing home visits and focusing on infants; and promoting community analysis of problems facing young children. These and other field-level examples provide an indication of the potential of the United Nations system, working through UNDAFs and based on both its operational and normative roles, to provide impetus and capacity-building support for children's rights to food, nutrition and survival in some of the poorest regions and countries, including those with widespread challenges of hunger and undernourishment among children.

30. Some 63 countries now have some form of PRS. These countries are home to an estimated 63 million children under age five years who are underweight, or about 43 per cent of all underweight children. However, there is considerable scope for further attention to issues of child hunger and undernutrition in national poverty reduction processes. An analysis of PRSs worldwide undertaken by WFP in 2006 found variable but generally very limited attention to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially among children, with the exception of strategies in Asia.

31. With the major emphasis on national leadership and capacity development, including for policy formulation, analysis of Millennium Development Goal-related development issues and scaling up based on evidence and lessons learned, UNCTs, in collaboration with the ECHUI secretariat and the wider partners' group, will work with national authorities in support of the consideration of child hunger and nutrition challenges in the framework of their PRS, national development plan, subnational plans and programmes and related expenditure frameworks. The Sahelian subregion again provides a leading example of where such efforts are taking place. Here, UNCTs, with regional support, are assisting Governments to take the leadership role in addressing child hunger and undernutrition as a policy, programme and investment priority, including in PRSs and SWAps), as well as supporting national capacities for field assessment, monitoring, analysis, programme design and implementation, and advocating with bilateral and multilateral funding agencies.

32. The Initiative will work in similar ways in support of countries which have adopted national nutrition strategies or specific plans for child hunger and nutrition.

Where these exist, as in parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Initiative will collaborate with Governments that are undertaking progress reviews, evaluations or revisions to nutrition-related plans. It will particularly aim to facilitate national access to international evidence and expertise, relevant examples from other countries and verified good practice, in order to inform national strategy development to address child hunger and undernutrition on a durable basis.

Recommendation

33. It is recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. *Approves* the participation of UNICEF in the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative, including in its work plan and secretariat, as described in E/ICEF/2007/11 and within the framework of its medium-term strategic plan;

2. *Requests* UNICEF to report on the Initiative on a regular basis, including through the annual report to the Executive Board.

Annex 1

Proposed targets and strategies to be promoted

I. Key target: Reduce the percentage of underweight children under age five years by one half, between 1990 and 2015

1. This indicator corresponds to Millennium Development Goal 1, Target 2: "halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger".

2. An indicated global target trajectory for the percentage of children under age five years in developing countries who are underweight[1] is as follows:

1990: 33 per cent

2005: 29 per cent

2011: 22 per cent

2015: 16.5 per cent.

3. Using a phased approach and supporting countries to scale up their national efforts, the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative will help to bring about a long-term, sustained decline in the proportion of children under age five years who are underweight from about one third to one sixth or less.

4. **In the immediate term:** Between 2007 and 2015, the Initiative will help to reduce the proportion of children under age five years who are underweight from about 28 to 16 per cent — a 12 point improvement.

5. **Reduction in the number of undernourished children:** This percentage reduction will reduce the estimated number of undernourished children under five years of age from some 149 million in 2005 to about 96 million in 2015, i.e., below 100 million children, even accounting for population growth.[2]

6. **Interim target:** By 2011, the proportion of underweight children should fall to below one quarter.

7. **Rate of progress:** The Initiative will aim to double the rate of improvement, from 1.7 per cent per year in the period 1990-2004 to over 3 per cent per year. Major acceleration will be needed, particularly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

II. Related and supporting targets[3]

- **Iodized salt**: The percentage of households in the developing world that are consuming iodized salt should increase from about two out of three (69 per cent in 1998-2004) to at least four out of five by 2015.
- **Exclusive breastfeeding**: The proportion of children in the developing world below age six months who are exclusively breastfed should rise from just over one third (36 per cent in 1998-2004) to at least one half by 2015.

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[1] Current estimates, subject to revision and updating in due course based on recalculation using the new WHO growth standards and based on new MICS/DHS data.

[2] Using mid-range population projection from the United Nations Population Division.

[3] To be elaborated further, including for household food security.

- **Vitamin A supplementation**: Coverage of two vitamin A capsules per year for all children aged 6-59 months in 103 affected countries should increase from 16 per cent in 1999 and 58 per cent in 2004, to close to 100 per cent by 2011.
- **Community therapeutic feeding**: Greatly increased survival of infants and children with severe acute malnutrition should be achieved using community therapeutic feeding with ready to use therapeutic foods such as Plumpy'Nut. Some 300,000 severely malnourished children will be saved each year. The focus will be on countries with severe levels of household food insecurity and/or significant levels of severe acute malnutrition and/or HIV infection.
- **Hand-washing**: By 2010, all developing countries to have an ongoing national campaign to promote hand-washing with soap.
- **Household water treatment**: By 2010, at least 40 developing countries to have a sustained and ongoing campaign to promote household drinking water treatment and safe storage in rural, peri-urban and urban slum areas.
- **Sanitation**: The percentage of households in developing countries using an improved sanitation facility should increase from about 50 per cent in 2004 to about 70 per cent in 2015.

III. Key strategies to be used and promoted by the Initiative

1. Increased **awareness** of hunger and undernutrition, and understanding of potential solutions:

(a) get critical information to decision makers, using an improved evidence base;

(b) increase public awareness and participation through media and community dialogue;

(c) use social and behavioural change approaches to promote empowerment of families and communities.

2. Stronger national **policies** and programmes:

(a) improved situation analysis of child hunger and undernutrition, to support policies;

(b) linking with and integration of nutrition with the major push on child-related Millennium Development Goals, particularly Goals 4 and 6, including scaled-up sets of interventions;[4]

(c) adequate prioritization in PRSs, SWAps, development plans and national budgets;

(d) align United Nations and international assistance around national plans, to support scaling-up.

[4] Several sets of specific interventions are outlined in the ECHUI Global Framework for Action. These are: (a) health, nutrition and hygiene education; (b) household food security; (c) micronutrient supplementation; (d) household water treatment; (e) hand-washing with soap; and (f) parasite control (de-worming). These would be assessed in each country and integrated with service delivery systems.

3. Increased **community action**:

(a) communities identifying, monitoring and supporting hungry and undernourished children;

(b) reaching children and families with integrated support and commodities.

4. **More effective and accountable global efforts**:

(a) monitoring and evaluation of this and related initiatives, updating with the latest evidence and knowledge;

(b) global reporting of disaggregated data (*Progress for Children*);

(c) an innovative and dynamic partners' group, working with national and regional actors and motivating UNCTs and national alliances.

Annex 2

UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (E/ICEF/2005/11) 2006-2009 results matrix (extract)

Targets, indicators, areas of cooperation and evaluations to which ECHUI partnerships will provide support

MTSP focus area	Targets (abridged formulation)	Indicators	Areas of cooperation	Evaluations and surveys
Young child survival and development	**Target 4**: Coverage of high-impact health and nutrition packages **Target 5**: All high U5MR countries with PRS or equivalent with medium-term targets for scaling up high-impact health and nutrition packages, linked to medium-term expenditure frameworks (MTEFs) **Target 6**: Increase the no. of families using appropriate care and feeding practices **Target 7**: Family access to services and essential resources for child survival, growth and development **Target 8**: All programme countries have an enabling policy environment for improved family and care practices for survival, growth and development	Rate of undernutrition/ % of children <5 years who are undernourished % of children who received vitamin A supplement within last 6 months % high U5MR countries with MTEFs which include quantified targets for scaling up health and nutrition interventions % of infants exclusively breastfed (<6 months) % of children <5 with diarrhoea who received oral rehydration therapy and continued feeding % of households reached by programmes to support parenting for young child development % of countries with programmes at scale that support good parenting and communication for marginalized/excluded children No. of programme countries with national plans that included targets for scaling up improved family and community care practices	Child survival intervention packages Monitoring, disease control and nutritional surveillance Leverage resources for U5MR reduction Procurement/supply of essential supplies for health and nutrition interventions Prevention/control of anaemia and other micronutrient deficiencies Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illness Promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding Community "triple A" processes (assessment-analysis-action) Provision of essential health and nutrition resources and commodities at community level Communication for behavioural change and social development Scaling up for universal salt iodization Promote essential hygiene practices	Evaluation of the UNICEF contribution to improving infant and young child feeding, including the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (2006-2007) Evaluation of impact of vitamin A supplementation (2008-2009)

MTSP focus area	Targets (abridged formulation)	Indicators	Areas of cooperation	Evaluations and surveys
		% households using adequately iodized salt % country programmes that have conducted gender analysis to identify challenges in family and community care practices *Note: several of the indicators in the WES key result area (3) are also relevant, including those on fetching water.* % of declared emergencies where a rapid assessment of the child health, nutrition, water/sanitation/hygiene situation has been conducted in the first 30 days % of severely malnourished children provided with therapeutic feeding	Disaster preparedness Rapid assessment Coordinate for provision of infant feeding and nutrition rehabilitation 6-8 weeks interventions as per the CCCs, including vitamin A supplementation and micronutrient supplies	
	Target 12: Fully implement the CCCs for young child health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene in declared emergency situations			
Basic education and gender equality	**Target 8**: No. of programme countries with national quality standards based on "child-friendly schools" or similar	No. of programme countries adopting quality standards though models such as "child friendly" schools	Link nutrition and other early interventions with primary school Improve health, cognitive development and learning readiness (e.g., though school meals, anaemia and iodine deficiency disorder reduction, anti-helminths)	Evaluation of effects of parenting programmes (2006-2007) Evaluation of impact of child-friendly schools (2006-2007)
HIV/AIDS and children	**Target 1**: In 54 countries, increase the proportion of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs) who are receiving care, support and protection	% of OVCs receiving free basic external support	Promote successful innovations to provide access to essential services with priority focus on OVCs and including linkages with home-based care.	Evaluation of impact of suppressive antiretrovirals on breastfeeding (2006-2007)

MTSP focus area	Targets (abridged formulation)	Indicators	Areas of cooperation	Evaluations and surveys
Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights	The four key results (on information, analysis, policy advocacy and child & youth participation) and eight targets are cross-sectoral and/or at macro level. All will encompass nutritional issues.	*Many of the indicators, which are cross-sectoral and/or at macrolevel, encompass issues of child nutrition.*	*Many of the areas of cooperation under this focus area encompass child nutritional issues.*	MDG reports and periodic reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child Multiple indicator cluster surveys Mid-term review of *A World Fit for Children*
Corporate-level evaluation	**2006-2007** UNICEF participation in budget processes (PRS, SWAps) Effectiveness of child-to-child programmes Corporate performance in humanitarian response **2008-2009** UNICEF and joint programming Efficiency in going to scale from pilot interventions Linking social policy/support systems to family empowerment.			

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The gender-balanced UNICEF workplace: an update on progress

Summary

This report updates the Executive Board on recent progress towards achieving gender balance at UNICEF. When the previous report on this subject was presented to the Executive Board at the second regular session of 2004 (E/ICEF/2004/17),[1] UNICEF was encouraged to continue its efforts to improve the gender balance of staff, especially at senior levels. UNICEF has since taken specific steps to achieve the United Nations goal of achieving 50/50 gender balance for all levels of posts.[2]

In 2005, UNICEF commissioned a study to analyse the challenges and obstacles to the advancement of women, particularly at senior levels, where imbalance had persisted.[3] UNICEF took immediate steps to address the findings and recommendations of the study, issued in May 2006, which primarily covered four priority areas: recruitment, retention, talent management, and the work culture of UNICEF.

This report updates the Board on progress made and measures being taken by UNICEF to achieve gender parity and equality in the workplace, taking note of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

[1] "Update on developments in human resources".

[2] General Assembly resolution 50/164 of 22 December 1995 set a goal of 50/50 gender distribution in managerial and decision-making positions. This was followed by General Assembly resolution 59/164 of 20 December 2004, reaffirming 50/50 gender distribution for all posts "in the very near future".

[3] *Gender Parity in Senior Management in UNICEF*, May 2006 (Sarah Murison, The Capacity Development Group, Inc.).

* E/ICEF/2007/8.

Note: Submission of this document was delayed for technical reasons.

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I. Background

1. UNICEF is committed to gender equality in accordance with its mission and its mandate. The organization recognizes that gender balance is a good business practice for achieving its mission.

2. A 1985 policy to achieve 33-per-cent female representation of International Professional (IP) staff by 1990 was realized.[4] A follow-up goal[5] set a target of gender parity by 2000. Though this target was not achieved, considerable progress was made by that year, with Professional women staff representing 42 per cent of the workforce.

3. At its second regular session in September 2004, the Executive Board recognized the progress made by UNICEF towards gender parity and urged UNICEF to continue efforts to achieve gender balance, especially at the senior managerial level.

4. Today, UNICEF ranks among the three agencies having the highest levels of gender parity, with IP female staff members making up 47 per cent of the workforce. However, resilient pockets of imbalance have persisted, and the attainment of full parity at senior levels (P5/L5 and above) has proven to be a considerable challenge.

II. The Report on Gender Parity in Senior Management in UNICEF (2006)

5. In June 2005, UNICEF commissioned a study to analyse the obstacles and challenges in the advancement of women, particularly at senior levels, and to make proposals for concrete action. The report was issued in 2006.

6. The study's overall methodology was to combine formal data from the personnel database of the Division of Human Resources with information on the experiences, insights and perceptions of staff and former staff, gathered by means of interviews, focus groups, surveys and visits to two field offices. The latter findings were validated by a process of cumulative review by staff members in successive interviews and focus groups. The review confirmed that the findings represented a broad consensus on typical staff-member experience. The overall data were reinforced by comparative information from sister agencies.

7. The study indicated several broad findings (as of June 2005):

(a) **There is a clear business case for gender parity in UNICEF** based on the organization's mandate, which articulates principles of universality and equality, and on the need for diversity of management styles, perspectives and competencies so that the organization can remain optimally productive and 'results-based' in the evolving development context;

(b) **UNICEF had performed well on gender balance issues at the P1/L1 to P4/L4 levels**, achieving a proportion of women at these levels just short of full parity (46 percent). Nevertheless, early indications of a possible slowing of the

[4] CF/AI/1985-26, Guidelines on Monitoring the Situation of Women in UNICEF.

[5] CF/EXD/1991-015, Executive Director's Response to the Recommendations of the UNICEF Task Force on Women.

positive trend suggested the need for specific steps to reinstate and sustain the momentum;

(c) **Within this overall picture, the study noted promising indications**. UNICEF had achieved a proportion of 43 per cent for female Country Representatives, a figure that reflected the proportion of all female International personnel in the organization (44 per cent), with over 50 per cent in two regions (East Asia and the Pacific and the Americas and Caribbean). Moreover, gender balance had been achieved in several country office management teams and divisional directorates at headquarters;

(d) **UNICEF had not been able to achieve a similar consistency of performance in achieving gender balance for the senior management functions**, where an average of 37 per cent of appointments at the P5/L5 to D2/L7 levels went to women;

(e) **Several areas will require strong action by managers and particularly careful monitoring at the level of the Senior Staff Review and Global Management Team (GMT) if the parity target is to be met**. Of particular concern was a decline in gender balance at the D2/L7 level, from 29 per cent to 19 per cent, over the previous three years. The management category with the lowest proportion of women (14 per cent) was that of Division Director.

8. The report identified several reasons for the imbalances: (a) generally weak accountability mechanisms in human resource management and other areas; (b) difficulties in finding equal numbers of male and female candidates for many vacancies, and in some cases the perception of a more stringent application of competency and qualification criteria to female candidates than to male candidates; (c) the existence of informal parallel networks, including social networks, to which women have unequal access, with relationships formed in these networks often influencing decisions on hiring and promotion; (d) a greater number of emergency and non-family duty stations in several regions, for which a larger proportion of women than men have difficulty in being considered and in accepting assignments; and (e) a management and work culture that poses difficulties for women not only in the achievement work/life balance but also in the attainment of professional recognition.

9. The study identified two principal areas for change:

(a) the strengthening of competency-based performance assessment, recruitment and promotion so that gender biases are removed, together with improvements in other aspects of human resource management that impact gender balance, such as talent development and the full implementation of family-friendly policies;

(b) an improved management and work culture that addresses identified problems such as work overload and shortcomings in gender-sensitive management that affect all staff, particularly women, and contribute to attrition, undue stress and less-than-optimal performance.

10. The study revealed several complex interlocking phenomena, as mentioned above, which underlie shortcomings in gender parity at UNICEF. Nevertheless, given the progress made thus far and considering the anticipated high level of retirements over the coming five years, the study concluded that gender parity could

be achieved if senior management took a clear and accountable lead role, allocated sufficient resources, introduced special measures as required to ensure equal opportunities for men and women, and addressed weaknesses that staff have identified in the working environment, which affect gender parity in specific ways.

III. Management action

11. Beginning in June 2006, the Executive Director moved quickly to address these recommendations. She requested that the Organizational Review, and the supporting Strategic Review of Human Resources Management, incorporate the findings of the gender report in their work. She expressed her commitment by ensuring that the Organizational Review Steering Committee and its Reference Group were gender balanced. In addition, she established a practice that encourages gender balance for all committees at UNICEF.

12. The Executive Director appointed a Special Advisor on Gender and Diversity in June 2006 to support and monitor the implementation of the recommendations and attainment of the goals laid out in the report. The Special Adviser reports on progress to the Executive Director and to the GMT.

13. The initial action taken by the Executive Director on the findings and recommendations of the 2006 *Gender Parity in Senior Management* study have already produced promising immediate results and will continue to accelerate progress towards gender balance.

IV. Achievements to date

14. In the first-ever Senior Staff Rotation and Recruitment Exercise, initiated by the Executive Director and first implemented in June 2006, positive action was taken to increase the gender balance in senior management. As a result of the appointments made, by 1 January 2007, the percentage of women at the D2 level had risen from 19 per cent to 35 per cent, and at the D1/L6 level from 33 per cent to 38 per cent. The percentage of female IPs now stands at 47 per cent.

15. The improvements highlight the important role played by (a) political will for change, (b) constructive attention to the issue by senior management, and (c) the availability of accurate data and monitoring mechanisms to support decision-making.

16. A corporate gender-parity scorecard showing the most recent data has been prepared and posted on the intranet as a spreadsheet, and is updated monthly. When the Division of Human Resources rolls out its new SAP database capability, anticipated for June 2007, the scorecard will show all data and metrics in real time and in a fully comparable manner.

Figure I
Global IP staff trend, including staff in the temporary-fixed term (TFT) category, January 2007

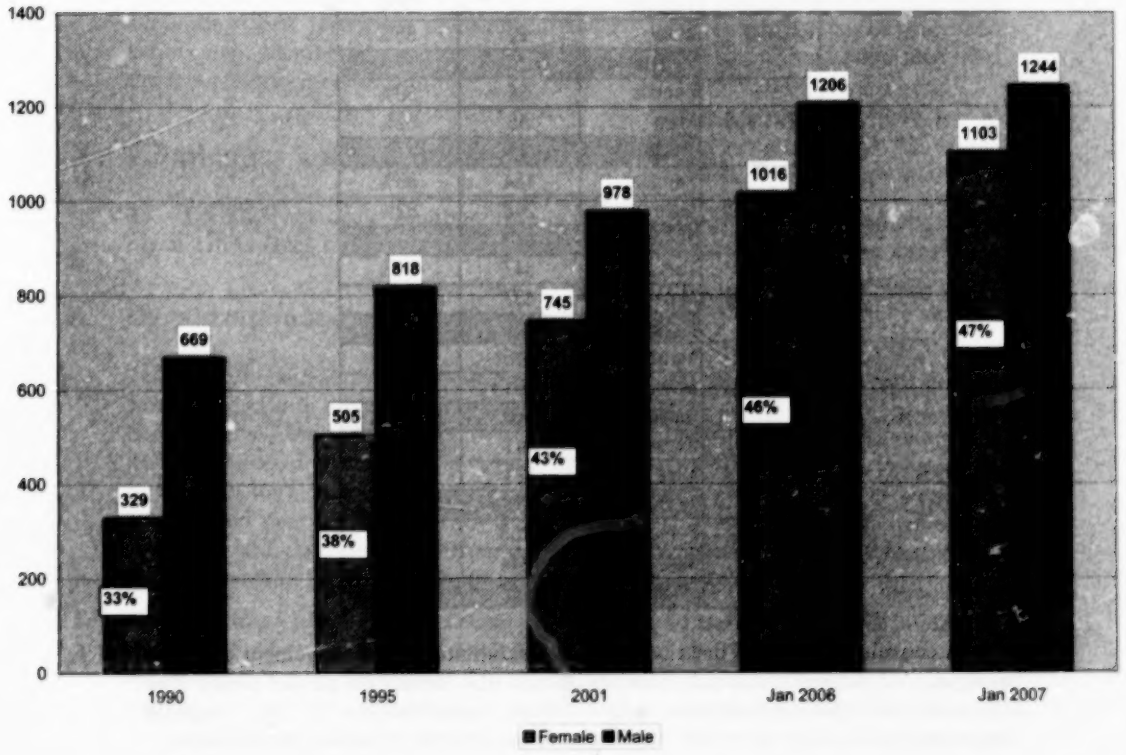


Table 1
Global IP staff (including TFTs), 1 January 2007

International Professional:			
D-2	Female	12	35%
	Male	22	65%
	Sub-total	34	
D-1/ L-6	Female	34	38%
	Male	55	62%
	Sub-total	89	
P-5 / L-5	Female	154	38%
	Male	248	62%
	Sub-total	402	
P-4 / L-4	Female	347	44%
	Male	437	56%
	Sub-total	784	
P-3 / L-3	Female	315	47%
	Male	361	53%
	Sub-total	676	
P-2 / L-2 and P-1 / L-1	Female	241	67%
	Male	121	33%
	Sub-total	362	
Total	Female	1103	47%
	Male	1244	53%
	Sub-total	2347	

17. A consulting firm has been contracted to facilitate staff/management dialogue on aspects of the work and management culture that impact on gender parity. The outcomes of this consultation will include contributions to the ongoing Organizational Review and to the development of supportive learning programmes.

18. An Exit Survey has been introduced to capture key information from all separating staff. In particular, this tool will enable the evaluation of UNICEF success in implementing more favourable policies to assist families, and particularly women, in meeting their personal obligations under the work/family agenda. It will also help to track retention rates and changes in staff perceptions of the work culture.

19. To accommodate work/life issues, a revised and more flexible Special Leave Policy (CF/AI/2007-001) and a new Parental Leave Replacement guideline (CF/AI/2007-006) have been issued to facilitate procedures for, and re-entry of, staff members who take leave, including to care for their newborn children.

20. The UNICEF Policy on Preventing Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority was issued in December 2005. At all levels of the organization, awareness of the policy is being raised and staff are being sensitized to the issues it addresses. Training materials will be developed and used in induction and training programmes.

21. A newly introduced Men in Leadership course was first held in July 2006. The course, designed to create greater awareness of and sensitivity to gender

perspectives among men in positions of leadership, complements the ongoing Women in Leadership programme.

22. Gender Review Group has been established, and includes representatives of each region and unit in the organization. Members of the group are tasked with supporting their respective management teams in implementing the strategy and action plan. Members have met three times in various regions and have identified the group's priorities for action.

V. Challenges and opportunities

23. UNICEF has made good progress in reaching gender parity. Nevertheless, the organization faces several challenges as well as opportunities in pursuing this goal.

A. Organizational changes

24. The Organizational Review promises strategic shifts in the way UNICEF works, and efforts in gender equity will need to align with these shifts. The Review has confirmed the commitment of UNICEF to actively promote gender equity in human resources planning. The exercise presents an opportunity to sharpen the skills of all staff, including in advocacy and the use of technology, and to encourage a continued commitment to excellence through the setting and measurement of standards and results, including as they relate to ensuring gender diversity and improvements in the work culture.

25. There is a need to better understand the skills of staff in-house and to identify talent gaps through objective methods of assessment. The Strategic Review of Human Resources Management has called for a renewed emphasis on the recruitment and talent identification as well as the capacity-development of all staff. In accordance with the review's recommendations, further action will be taken to define competencies and assess staff through multiple and more objective means of assessment, and to develop mentoring/coaching programmes, in order to strengthen the leadership capacity of women. The greater transparency of competency-based procedures will help to ensure that UNICEF fully benefits from the talents and skills of its female staff members.

26. Existing models of leadership will need to be analysed for gender stereotypes that might affect the recruitment and promotion of women. UNICEF is committed to openness and learning, and will need to broaden the understanding among staff that gender equality is not 'just' a women's issue. The value of gender diversity needs to be discussed and advanced with the support, engagement and responsibility of male staff.

B. The exigencies of UNICEF humanitarian work

27. Given that 40 per cent of UNICEF resources are in emergency countries, many staff work long hours in challenging situations and in duty stations that are non-family.[6] UNICEF faces the possibility of missing out on the skills and experience of

[6] 2006 UNICEF Annual Report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/2006/11).

female staff in emergency countries unless continued attention is paid to staff security and a safe working environment that may particularly affect women. Equally important is the need to ensure mobility and work/life policies that are flexible enough to support movement in and out of these duty stations so that the work/life balance is not threatened for extended periods.

28. Data indicate that 35 per cent of Representatives in duty stations categorized as D and E ("non-family") are female, and that women make up 35 per cent of all IPs in emergency duty stations. These relatively high percentages belie the perception about the ability or willingness of women to deploy to hardship and emergency stations, and indicate that with additional supportive efforts, greater numbers of women with such experience (increasingly a requirement for promotion) could be deployed and retained.

C. Ensuring management accountability

29. Managers have a vital role to play in ensuring gender parity. It is essential that managers be recognized for their contribution, and be held accountable for performance. Measures such as the gender scorecard, performance evaluation reviews, surveys, and other human resource tools under development will measure achievement against standards set.

D. Upcoming retirements

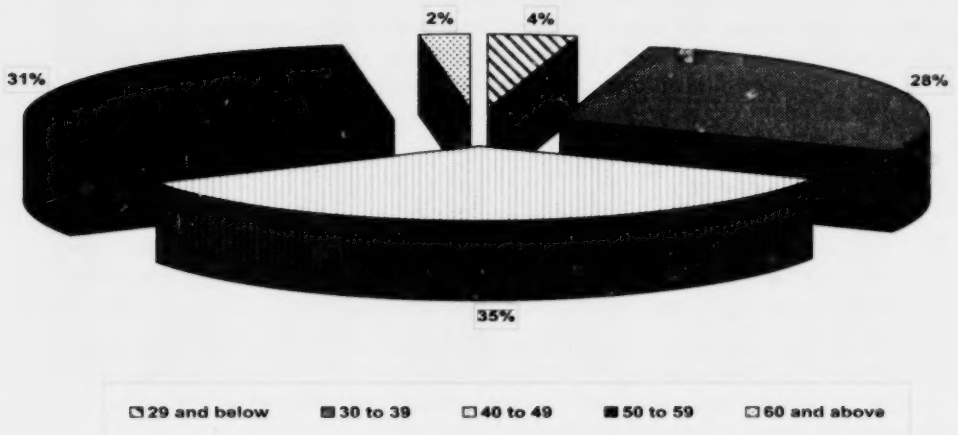
30. The substantial number of staff retiring in the next few years will present challenges and opportunities. From 2007 to 2010, it is expected that 209 IP staff members, 35 per cent of them women, will retire from UNICEF. These retirements will constitute 29 per cent of the 720 IP staff members currently in the 50-59 age group. Additionally, 235 staff members (or 33 per cent) in the 50-59 age group will turn 55 during this time, raising the possibility of additional retirements via early retirement. The United Nations Secretariat faces a similar challenge and opportunity, with 560 upcoming IP retirements, 38 per cent of them among female staff.

Table 2
Expected numbers of IP staff to retire 2007-2010

IP Staff Retirements	2007		2008		2009		2010		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
D-2	0	0	1	2	0	3	2	3	3	8
D-1	4	4	1	4	3	4	4	2	12	14
P-5	8	9	5	17	8	10	4	12	25	48
P-4	3	6	4	15	7	10	3	16	17	47
P-3	0	4	2	3	2	6	3	4	7	17
P-2	1	0	1	1	4	0	3	1	9	2
	16	**23**	**14**	**42**	**24**	**33**	**19**	**38**	**73**	**136**

31. UNICEF nevertheless has a robust pipeline of staff able to move into these positions, with a cohort of 817 in the 40-49 age range, 47 per cent of them women. The current staff development, assessment and succession-planning mechanisms require greater attention so that this next group of staff can be prepared for leadership and so that the knowledge and experience of retiring staff can be captured.

Figure II
Global IP age ratios by gender, 1 January 2007



E. Collaboration with the United Nations system

32. Achieving gender balance requires a common approach and mutual support among the various United Nations organizations. However, progress towards parity and the advancement of women in the system is highly uneven.[7] In the Secretariat and in many agencies, the numbers are significantly below parity and show negligible improvement in the Professional and higher categories. This uneven progress reduces the opportunity for mobility and exchange of women within the system. UNICEF must work with partners in the system to share experiences and lessons learned in overcoming gender imbalances and to strive for greater gender parity in common frameworks being established.

[7] "Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System". Report of the Secretary-General (A/61/318), 7 September 2006.

F. The changing demographics of the global workforce

33. The changing demographics of the global workforce will affect UNICEF. To begin with, the workforce is predicted to shrink, as is the working-age population in the most-developed countries.[8] The cultural and gender mix of workers will also change, with 75 per cent of new workers expected to come from Asia. In the United States market, it is predicted that by 2008 women and minorities will represent 70 per cent of entrants into the workforce.[9] In developing countries too, women are entering the labor force in greater numbers.[10]

34. This means that UNICEF as a global organization will need to be aware of workforce demographics, including shortages and growth areas, and ensure that it casts its net wide to source the competencies and the gender balance required.

35. In a competitive market, UNICEF will need to retain the best and ensure that its work/life policies accommodate generational needs. The UNICEF culture must embrace such policies as a way to reinforce results. Research shows that women are increasingly taking advantage of work/life policies at work and that women's production and commitment to their workplace actually increases as a result of the accommodation.

G. Promoting diversity

36. Realizing the goal of gender balance and equality will also enhance the organization's ability to enhance the diversity of its staff as measured by gender, national origin, ethnicity, age, and physical and other disabilities.

37. The recently adopted Convention on the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (13 December 2006) further compels UNICEF to strengthen the competency-based transparency of its recruitment and promotion processes to promote both diversity and gender balance.

38. UNICEF continues to pay due regard to geographic diversity in its recruitment. The proportion of UNICEF IPs from programme countries is near parity, at 47 per cent, up from 45 per cent in 2004, with disparity occurring at senior levels. Women represent 43 per cent of all programme country staff. Additionally, UNICEF has a rich cadre of National Professional staff, comprising 49 per cent of all Professional staff.

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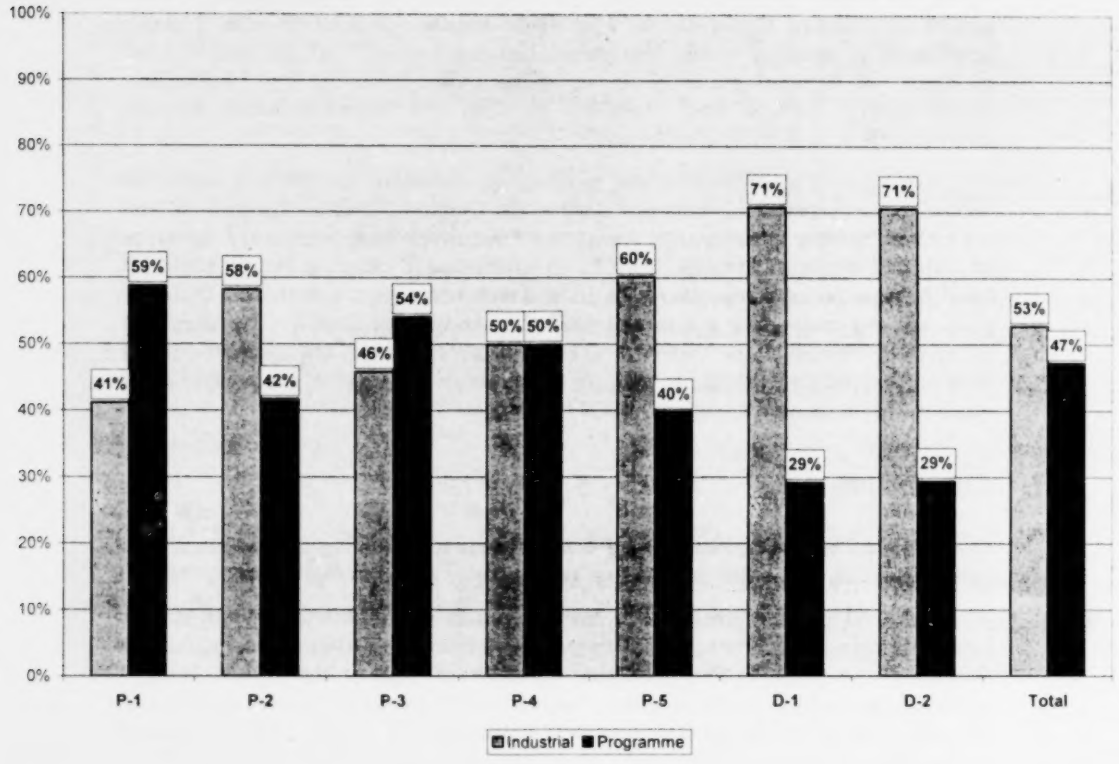
[8] Society for Human Resource Management, "Diversity Management in a Global Context", April 2005 (www.shrm.org,).

[9] Hewitt Associates, "Preparing the Workforce of Tomorrow", February 2004 (www.hewitt.com).

[10] UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 2007: Women and Children — The Double Dividend of Gender Equality*, page 10.

Figure III
Global IP geographic diversity (industrialized/programme countries) by level, 1 January 2007



H. Resource requirements

39. New initiatives, such as casting the net wide for recruitment, assessment methodologies, scorecards, mentoring and learning programmes, need resources. Allocations have already been made to support the above in line with recommendations from the Organizational Review and the implementation of the Strategic Review of Human Resources Management.

VI. Partnerships and United Nations reform

40. UNICEF works with its partners in the United Nations system, including the Bretton Wood Institutions, and in the public sector in furthering gender parity and equality.

41. The United Nations reform agenda provides further opportunities for partnership. UNICEF works with its partners to develop and harmonize policies related to benefits and entitlements, work/life balance, dual careers, spouse and

domestic partnership, mobility, and sexual harassment and other forms of harassment and abuse of authority.

42. Since 1999, UNICEF has proposed 31 candidates for the Resident Coordinator system, of whom 19 were male and 12 female. A total of 19 staff members have served as Resident Coordinators, 5 of them female. UNICEF is also a major contributor to mobility within the United Nations system: UNICEF has 35 staff members (16 women) currently on secondment (not including the 10 Resident Coordinators), and 16 staff members on loan (13 women), either through reimbursable or non-reimbursable loan.

43. Inter-agency coordination and pooling of resources for learning activities related to the Resident Coordinator system, the Common Country Assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework have promoted economies of scale and increased synergy. UNICEF is committed to ensuring that all staff will have the right set of competencies, skills and technical capacity, including those for advocacy, for convening actors and brokering knowledge, and for building and maintaining strategic partnerships. Learning programmes are supporting the development of these skills as well as the capacity to work in emergency, early recovery and transition situations.

VII. Conclusion

44. UNICEF has maintained strong commitments to achieving gender equality in its staff, placing particular emphasis on gender parity in senior management.

45. Partnerships within the United Nations system and multilateral organizations provide a learning and best practice framework for action. UNICEF is committed to allocating and pursuing the necessary resources to support the United Nations system goal of achieving 50/50 gender balance, in all levels, in the very near future. To support these efforts, the Organizational Review and its strategic human resource review have ensured gender equity as a core organizational imperative. Internal management guidelines set a framework for results and accountability.

46. UNICEF recognizes that the organization's full potential of excellence can only be realized by the full and equal inclusion of all its staff, and by providing a respectful and supportive work environment that enhances the staff's diversity, creativity, talents and shared values. These underlie the strengths of UNICEF as a strong, results-based and effective agency that remains the world's leading advocate for the rights and well-being of children and women.